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Around Miami-Dade

MIAMI -DADE

Residents can now get the 311 on all services

Miami-Dade officially launches its new 311 answer center today to help residents navigate County Hall more efficiently.

County residents can now dial 311 to, for example, get information about an upcoming commission meeting or to report a problem such as a stray dog. Center employees, who speak English, Spanish or Creole, have access to a county search engine that sifts through more than 7,000 topics on county services.

Requests are automatically routed to the appropriate offices, and a tracking number follows each request until the issue is resolved. Center employees answer the phone from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. weekdays.

The system, which is available in other major cities nationwide, cost the county \$2.7 million. Though the center generally handles about 80,000 calls a month, employees fielded 50,000 calls during the seven days surrounding Hurricane Katrina.